

# Soviet Marshal Warns the U.S. On Its Missiles

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Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, March 16 — Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, chief of the Soviet General Staff, said today that if the American medium-range missiles planned for deployment in Europe were used against the Soviet Union, the Russians would retaliate directly against the United States.

For the most part, the marshal, in a rare interview with a Western correspondent, struck a moderate posture, in particular by modifying his previous position and saying that once nuclear war began it could not be limited and controlled. He said: "The idea of nuclear war has never been tested. But by logic, to keep such a war limited will not be possible."

"Inevitably," he added, "such a war will extend to all-out war."

## Statements by Civilian Leaders

This new statement brings Marshal Ogarkov, who is also a First Deputy Minister of Defense, into line with virtually identical statements by top Soviet civilian leaders. It was apparently intended to curtail speculation about civilian-military rifts over nuclear doctrine and to undercut Western assertions that Soviet policy called for fighting prolonged nuclear wars, as United States policy does.

Previously, in an article published in the Soviet Military Encyclopedia last year, Marshal Ogarkov wrote of nuclear war, "The possibility cannot be excluded that the war could also be protracted."

Marshal Ogarkov also acknowledged for the first time publicly that Soviet land-based missiles in silos were becoming vulnerable to attack, as Rea-

gan Administration experts have long asserted about American land-based missiles. But he denied that the Soviet Union was trying to save these missiles from destruction by adopting a policy of launching them on the basis of warning by satellites.

Based on interviews with Marshal Ogarkov and other top Soviet officials and experts, there were few signs of willingness to alter the Soviet Union's position in the talks with the United States on limiting medium-range missiles in Europe. Their statements about the consequences of a new American missile deployment in Europe seemed to be hardening, perhaps for bargaining purposes and perhaps with serious intent.

"Very sad, very bad," the marshal said when asked about the consequences of new American missile deployments planned to start later this year. "This increases the U.S. nuclear strategic arsenal relative to the Soviet arsenal," he said. "Therefore, adequate retaliatory steps will be taken."

"If the U.S. would use these missiles in Europe against the Soviet Union," he said, "it is not logical to believe we will retaliate only against targets in Europe. Let me tell you, if some of your experts think this, they are foolish."

## The Soviet Proposal

Told that whether or not new American missiles are deployed in Europe, Administration officials expect Moscow to deploy a new series of short-, medium- and long-range missiles, he responded: "If the Soviet proposal is adopted, the situation will improve for both sides quickly. An important element of confidence will come into the picture."

In the talks under way in Geneva, Moscow has proposed to reduce its force of some 500 SS-4, SS-5 and SS-20 missiles to 162 — equal to the total of French and British missiles. Another 100 SS-20 missiles aimed at China and Japan would not be included. President Reagan has offered to forgo the planned deployment of 572 Pershing 2's and low-flying cruise missiles if the Soviet Union removes all its medium-range missiles aimed at Europe.

The Reagan Administration has also proposed until Moscow makes the next move. Soviet officials here insisted that this was not going to happen, and they expect Western European pressure to push Washington toward a new position first.

In general, there seemed to be a growing sense of Soviet vulnerability and Western threat, mirroring the Reagan Administration's concerns. The Soviet attitude is expressed along with renewed determination to try to forestall new American missile deployment in the wake of the West German elections March 6, and failing that, to respond "globally and regionally," a top Soviet official said.

## Statements by Party Leaders

The interview with Marshal Ogarkov was held in his office at 6 Gogol Boulevard, a neo-classical town house built in 1848 by an industrialist. The marshal receives visitors on the second floor, in a flag-draped conference room paneled in dark oak, at the end of a 30-foot dark oak conference table.

His red hair swept back in the Slavic style, four inches of battle ribbons on the chest of his olive green uniform, the 65-year-old Marshal Ogarkov spoke in Russian, softly and slowly, sometimes almost inaudibly. An army colonel translated.

Marshal Ogarkov is used to having people listen to him, confident in discoursing on general strategy and details, always careful to interject statements by Communist Party leaders.

Asked about charges by Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger that whatever Soviet doctrine was, Moscow was building the ability to fight prolonged nuclear wars, the marshal responded that the Soviet Union would take "all necessary measures" to defend itself and deter war.

"If an enemy starts a war and uses nuclear weapons first, the Soviet Union would be forced to behave accordingly," he said.

## 'Not an Ultimatum'

One of the few indications that the Russians might consider compromising on their stance on the medium-range missile talks came from Aleksandr Y. Bovin, the senior Izvestia commentator known for his connections to the party leadership. "The Soviet proposal is not an ultimatum," he said in an interview.

But he added that he spoke as a former lieutenant, not a general, and that he was speaking only for himself. "In the abstract, if you have more rockets there is need for more negotiations," he continued. "But this is a very dangerous game."

Soviet officials said that French and British missile forces would not have to be formally included in the agreement with the United States but that they would have to be taken into account. By this they said they meant there would be a paragraph in the treaty stating that

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Moscow could increase its missile forces in response to French and British rises and would be obliged to decrease if London and Paris cut their forces.

The Soviet officials maintained that French and British missiles now contained 386 warheads; that in two years they would increase by 110 warheads, and that by the end of the decade they would total about 1,200. These plans for growth were what agitated Soviet officials most.

#### Missiles in Soviet Asia

The officials also said that not all of the 500 missiles to be removed from positions facing Europe to reach the level of 162 would be dismantled and destroyed. They implied that at least some of the SS-20's now aimed at Europe would be redeployed to the Soviet Far East. They said the number of SS-20's in the Far East was now 108, as opposed to 99 reported by American intelligence. And the Soviet officials indicated that their plans called for greater numbers in the Far East to meet a growing Chinese and American threat on that front.

In effect, they argued that it was cheaper to redeploy existing SS-20's from Europe than to build new ones. The officials also refused to make any distinctions between Pershing and cruise missiles. Some American officials had hoped that the Russians might be willing eventually to go along with

the deployment of some cruise missiles that would take more than two hours to fly to Soviet territory in exchange for not deploying the Pershings, which could hit Soviet territory in 6 to 10 minutes, depending on the target.

Marshal Ogarkov said it was a "wrong interpretation" that any statements made by Soviet officials indicated that Moscow was adopting a strategy of launching its land-based missiles on satellite warnings.

"Public attention has to be drawn to the fact that the finger must be withdrawn from the nuclear trigger," he said. "We are approaching a dangerous line. There is an old Russian saying: 'Even an unloaded rifle can fire once in 10 years. And once in a hundred years, even a rake can produce a shot.' We have to keep our senses and be extremely careful," he said.

Asked about the vulnerability of land-based missiles, the marshal said: "I can say that for the time being ICBM's are quite reliable. As for the future, their survivability will undoubtedly be decreasing. In order to avoid the negative consequences of such changes for peace and security, we need talks and agreements on limitation of armaments."

The marshal added, however, that the structure of forces was determined over many years. To change it "rapidly or suddenly is practically impossible," he said.